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**NSC BRIEFING**

**VENEZUELA**

25X1

- I. **Commies believed to have achieved some penetration of govt at all levels with members or sympathizers.**
- A. **Cabinet may include 6 Commies or sympathizers.**
- B.  **Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV)**  
leaders claim that:
1. **Ministers of Interior and Education are active members.**
  2. **That Minister of Foreign Relations is former member and active sympathizer.**
  3. **That two other ministers are cooperating with PCV.**
  4. **This Commie claim may be exaggerated, but it is indicative of considerable Commie gains.**
- C. **Minister of Finance and Under Secretary of Interior have record of Commie activity.**
- II. **Govt unlikely seriously to restrict Commies.**
- A. **President Larrazabal stated that Commies numbered only 12,000 (our estimate is 25,000), were patriotic Venezuelans without international ties.**
1. **PCV had endorsed Larrazabal's presidential candidacy.**
- III. **Commies active in united political and labor organizations.**
- A. **Only one leader of major non-Commie party--COPEI (social christian)--has publicly opposed Commie participation in future govt.**
- IV. **Commies reportedly have substantial influence in universities.**
- V. **Commies have considerable influence in press.**

- A. Non-Communist press, with exception of Catholic paper, is favorably oriented toward PCV.
  - B. PCV apparently has substantial financial resources for its own press.
- VI. PCV is not known to have penetrated military, whose top leaders allegedly are staunchly anti-Communist.
- VII. There is little effective civilian opposition to Commies.
- A. And the military thus far has been reluctant to take unilateral action against the Commies.
  - B. We conclude then, that govt is Commie-penetrated but not dominated.
    - 1. Commies do not have capability of seizing or dominating govt at present.
    - 2. Control of top govt positions by known Commies would probably not be in their interest because of possible military coup.
    - 3. Commie objective probably to maintain present highly favorable climate.
    - 4. And in meantime they are in good position to influence the govt's actions.